

STUDIES *in* TORAH JUDAISM

KNOWLEDGE AND LOVE
IN RABBINIC LORE

By Dr. LEO JUNG



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KNOWLEDGE AND LOVE " IN RABBINIC LORE

By

LEO JUNG, 1892 -

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CONTENTS

Editor's Introduction Dr. Leon D. Stitskin	5
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KNOWLEDGE AND LOVE IN RABBINIC LORE

Introductory	7
Man's Knowledge of God	10
Of Love and Knowledge	22
N o t e s	50

EDITOR'S INTRODUCTION

This year marks a milestone in the life and work of the distinguished spiritual leader, scholar and prolific author, Dr. Leo Jung. The Jewish community is commemorating his seventieth birthday and the fortieth anniversary of his rabbinate at the Jewish Center, New York City.

On this occasion we are pleased to publish the learned essay by Dr. Leo Jung, "Knowledge and Love in Rabbinic Lore" as part of our series of Studies in Torah Judaism. In an authentic sense, the title of the monograph characterizes the career and goals of this esteemed teacher in Israel. The two essential components of Judaism which Dr. Jung has promulgated have been based upon a pursuit of knowledge and a spirit of love and warm fellowship. If the *Echod* in the *Shma* which is central in the Hebraic world scheme commits us to an intellectually grounded faith, it also denotes a faith of *ahavah*. *Echod* and *ahavah*, it has been pointed out, have acrostically *begmatría* the same numerical value. They each add up to thirteen.

By the same token, it is asserted that if the first book of the Bible, the book of Genesis gives us *tevnah* — a knowledge of the basic laws operative in the universe — and the book of Exodus speaks of *emunah* — faith in the inviolability of these laws — the third book Leviticus introduces us to "hibah" — love. *Keriah l'shon hibah* — the very word *vayikra* indicates a spirit of love. This constitutes another concept of the encounter with the Divine apart from knowledge and faith. The rabbis rightly point out that the appellations E-lohim or E-l are not mentioned but Adonai which points to the attribute of love.

Franz Rozenzweig who regarded revelation as a fact and not as a poetic phase, describes it as the flow of God's love to the heart of man in which the immediate content is the spirit of love.

Dr. Jung since 1931 has been professor of Ethics at Yeshiva University and author of many scholarly volumes including the Jewish Library series.

I am indebted to the revered President of Yeshiva University Dr. Samuel Belkin, for initiating the publication of these studies and lending it his intellectual guidance and wholehearted support.

DR. LEON D. STITSKIN, *Editor*
Special Publications, Yeshiva University

KNOWLEDGE AND LOVE IN RABBINIC LORE

INTRODUCTORY

Knowledge and love have been from the very inception of Judaism twin goals of individual and collective life. But their foundation throughout has been justice as social morality. "*The righteous man (Tsaddik) is the basis of the world.*" The pedagogical device of promised reward and punishment threatened — serving as the means of accustoming men to choose good and shun evil — indicate the universal validity of justice as the vital principle of life, an "*everlasting foundation*" (Prov. X, 25). This is what Moses had taught: "*Judge the people with righteous judgment.*" "*Justice and only justice shalt thou pursue*" (in J. H. Hertz's version) "*that thou mayest live and inherit the land*" (Deb. XVI, 18-20). Judgment, truth and peace are interdependent: if judgment is executed, truth is vindicated and peace results.

Among the notable encounters with God (*moade Hashem*) reported in the Hebrew Bible are a number of dialogues, from Abraham to Job, each of which deals with one of the aspects of His revelation. The double meaning of Tsedek (both, love and justice, mishpat u-tzedakah) forms the priori basis for these dialogues. To Abraham, His pioneer ambassador, life without rock-bottom assurance of God's justice, loses all meaning: "*Shall the Judge of all the earth not deal justly?!*" To Moses, our Teacher, only His forgiving mercy will give meaning to his own life: "*Otherwise, blot me, pray, from the book Thou hast written!*" Jonah ben Amittai, the young man on the way to become a

prophet, is being shown His all-embracing loving justice and just love: "*And shall I have no pity upon great Niniveh, its myriads of people and its very cattle?*" Despairing Job, unyielding in his plea of innocence and undeserved affliction, learns of His abounding love in the unending panorama of nature, man and beast in His world (XL to XLI).

But it is in the prose paragraphs of Halakhah that the *kalos-kagathos* of His fair love shines forth in unique splendor.

Love between husband and wife, to deserve the term kiddushin (sanctity) must partake of both qualities. Occasional overpowering affection is not enough. The Shulhan Arukh insists that there must be not only consent *to* marriage, but, for the dignity of both and the high level of love, there must be consent *in* marriage. In Jewish law the husband's conjugal rights do not include that of approaching his wife without her consent. He must woo her (Eben ha-Ezer XV) throughout the years of married life, only the Am-haaretz (brutal ignoramus) would ever transgress this basic prohibition. The love of fellow man, too, does not envisage a never-never land, a vacation dream of complete abandonment of one's rights and possessions, but fair and loving care. The Hafetz Hayyim, in his "Ahavat Hessed", describes its operation: as the folios of the Talmud and the account books of kehillot, the minutes of congregational or communal meetings (pinkassaot) reveal them: Love of one's fellow men creates such institutions as "Society for Hospitality to Wayfarers", For Palliative Momentary Help", "Free Loan Society", helping respectable poor over temporary embarrassment, or enabling a craftsman to obtain raw materials for the development of his economic security; "Society for the Dowring of Poor Brides", so that they may not grow old with frustration; "The Society for Visiting the Sick", Linat Hatzedek, the society for providing constant vigil at the bedside of persons dangerously ill; The Holy Society for taking care of the dead and providing those who had no relatives or friends with free burial and grave.

Maskil El Dal Society (literally dealing wisely with the poor) was meant to safeguard the self-respect of the recipient by bestowing its aid in utter secrecy. The Talmud reports about a heedless person offering in public his coin to a needy person. Said the sage who observed it: "You would have performed a greater mitzvah had you not shamed him thus" (Hagigah 10A).

In some communities a beautiful custom served the same purpose. Anyone sitting shiva would receive from the office of the local Jewish Welfare Society two boxes, one filled with money, the other empty. The rich would fill the empty one, the poor would empty the full one. The boxes would be sent back to that office and only the executive official would know what had happened.

Membership in the societies mentioned above was a hallmark of nobility to which every citizen of the Jewish collectivity aspired. Love for the fellowman resulted in market laws and the right of collective bargaining which prevented unfair competition and every form of exploitation from the Labor Relations Board (*minhag ha-medinah*) already in force in the time of the Mishnah to the ordinances prohibiting the truck system (whose baseness is described in John Steinbeck's "Grapes of Wrath"). Almost two thousand years ago the prohibition of this system and the establishment as recorded by Josephus of the right to a job was an obligation of state and society. In these laws social justice is the matrix and love the creative, crowning element. Rabbinic rules, indeed, present the legal commentary and the concretization of this love-crowned justice and justice-based love.

Gedolah deah shenitnah ben shte otivot — Great is that knowledge which includes two aspects of God's being: the omniscient power and infinite mercy. Only God has these qualities. *Ke E-l deot Hashem* — God's alone is the power of complete knowledge. Therefore He knows the motivation of actions. As omniscient God, He knows where an act is beneficial without being truly good and when a good act might be stillborn in spite of noble intention.

A million dollar building for an orphanage or a hospital may be a beneficial act from the point of view of the many it serves with its skills, its teachers and physicians. But it may not be a good act as far as the giver is concerned, as his motives may have been the expectation of reward, of public approval, or of the acquisition of a good name. God's knowledge composed of both omniscience and mercy will judge the frustrated humanitarian as if he had completed his task. For example, if his plans for similar benefaction miscarried from a sudden change in his financial fortune or from an unwise choice of means, God's merciful knowledge will assess the motivation of the person who does a beneficial act for ulterior motives. By Him attitudes and motivations are valued and accounted.

MAN'S KNOWLEDGE OF GOD

There are three sources within the limits of human capacity of what may be called his knowledge of his Creator. It will be found, however, to embrace His work rather than His essence. Of the latter man knows only that which His revelation has conveyed to him. The cosmos in all its massive beauty, infinite greatness and undeviating conformity to law and order, has given man — both emerging from primitiveness and civilized — a never-failing sense of divine power. The sequence of day and night, winter and summer, sowing and harvesting, as they spell His providence, have widened and deepened the knowledge of His works.

The study of God's mind, where accessible to human questing in progressive intuition as found in the deepest thought of every generation, represents an endeavor to fathom all possible motivations of His law — especially in the *Mitzvot Maassiyot*. Rambam has warned us that our interpretation of the *ta'ame hamitzvot*, encouraging and enlightening as they may appear to us, must never

be taken as final or exhaustive of the divine intent. The search in every age opens up new vistas and spurs new endeavor on the road to a wider and deeper understanding. It is the process, no less than the achievement, which is meritorious and promising of ever-greater horizons.

In general, both His Torah, our inferences from the beauty of His world, and the teachings of His prophets and disciples enable us, all distance off the goal notwithstanding, to achieve conviction as to God's moral character, His control of the universe and the purpose of His creation.

Our knowledge of God, however, remains exceedingly insecure wherever individual experience, fate and destiny are concerned. At no given moment can we tell with any degree of certainty the meaning of any particular event in the life of an individual. The finger of God in history will always depend on our reconstructive ingenuity. His very Torah proclaims it: *"And I appeared to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob as God Almighty."* They had seen Him, worshipped Him as the Omnipotent Creator of heaven and earth and human potentialities. *"But in my name as God of history I was not known to them."* It was only generations later that saw the blossoming of His promise, the election of Israel as His ambassador to mankind and the fulfillment of His pledge to bestow the Holy Land upon them. Isaac Arama, in his commentary, thus explains the enigmatic verse, *"Thou shalt see my back, but my face may not be seen"*: Long after figuratively speaking, God has turned His back upon an action or event, man may be able to trace an eventual end result of development as it were, God's finger in history: the connection between apparently insignificant seed and full harvest. Thus, the dream of Joseph was the first in a chain of divinely planned happenings that brought about: exile in Egypt, the revelation of Mt. Sinai, the conquest of Palestine and the vision of the Messianic age.

The Hebrew word for friendship *re-ut* (according to the revelatory verse in the Psalms *Attah yodata shivti vekumi banta be-re-i* literally, "*thou knowest my lying down and my rising up. Thou understandeth my thoughts from afar*") implies the sharing of ideas and ideals, a type of comradeship in noble causes. But man's love of God can neither be beneficial to Him in the usual sense of the word, nor can we in our terrestrial limitations be said to share anything with Him. It really spells a complete identification with what man considers most important. To illustrate it, I should like to refer to an apparently paradoxical prayer recited by the faithful every morning. It starts thus, *ahavah rabbah ahavtanu* "*With great love hast thou loved us. Exceeding mercy hast thou bestowed upon us. Merciful Father, all merciful, have mercy upon us.*" After this introduction one would expect something like "save us from the lion's den. Rescue us from the jaws of death." But what follows sounds anticlimactic: "Have mercy upon us and put it into our hearts to teach, to learn, to observe, to do and to fulfill the mitzvot of your Torah." Why must we implore God's mercy three times for that? The answer lies in the last word of that portion of the prayer — *b'ahavah* — with love. To learn with love, to teach with love, to fulfill in the love of God, to observe for the love of God. These are rare assets for which we need a special spirit of steadfast dedication. What we really ask for is the divine help to aid us in the quest for complete identification with God's name, in order that whatever we say, do, or fulfill may be a true expression of this utmost devotion. If the supreme form of love is identification with the beloved, so the supreme love of God must be a similar identification. "But God is in heaven and we are on earth and therefore let our words be few." How can we aspire to such identification with Him, no matter how genuine our love is?

To make that point clear we may well use the comment of the Midrash Rabbah on the second verse of the first chapter of the

Bible: *veruach E-lohim merabefet al pne hamayim*, which in literal translation means "The spirit of God hovers over the face of the waters." Said our sages: *ruho shel Mashiah* literally means, "the spirit of the Messiah." They want to suggest that in the very act of the creation of the world, the Lord had in mind the ultimate achievement, construction, consummation of the world of the Messiah, of a life free from prejudice, envy, hatred and one lived in justice, brotherhood and security. What we are asking in that great prayer is to be given spiritual asset of identification and we also refer to the way it can be achieved: "*enlighten our eyes through Thy Torah — for the love of Thee — an identification with Thy message.*" *Dabbek libbenu bemitzvotekha*, a complete attachment to Thy laws, training us in that identification with the ultimate aim of humanity, the eternal era or realm of righteousness and mercy as the fruit of such consistent effort. *Ve-yahed levavenu* — unite our hearts to love and revere Thy name.

It is the boldest prayer, the most potent quest to our Father in heaven to allow us within the limitation of human nature, that love of complete identification which will spell our own moral fulfillment, happiness, security and achievement of a world which He had planned in the spirit of the Messiah, as He created the ineffable boon of light upon cosmos.

There is a basic difference, often ignored, between two states in human relations: falling in love and loving. The first is the result of the sudden impact on one's senses or mind of an enchanting face or figure, of intellectual excellence or, on the lowest level, of material affluence.

To have fallen in love means to have been overcome by that impact to the exclusion, consciously or unconsciously, of every other consideration. How long this state lasts will depend upon the particular personality. It is essentially an ego-oriented condition. Modern Hebrew reveals its essential quality by using the reflexive 'hitahev', normally translated as 'falling in love', but literally

meaning 'loving one's self'. The person who has fallen in love has, by ignoring them, abrogated all other facets because he or she expects benefits — physical, spiritual or material, from the person with whom he or she has fallen in love. It is what the Mishna in Abot calls "*Ahavah Teluyah Bedavar*". The person who has fallen in love may fall out of it when his objective is achieved, may crawl out of it in the progressive stages of disillusionment, may leap out of it by sudden intuition of its worthlessness or as a result of a new powerful stimulus. Falling in love, one may be driven by unbridled desire into excesses of error or extreme. An altogether different state, condition or attitude is that of love. Love implies or pre-supposes a complete evaluation by the lover of the whole personality of the beloved. That sentiment is most likely to be more stable and enduring. It is not due to the upsurge of sudden emotion nor is it overwhelmingly dictated by self-interest. It results in the determination to dedicate one's knowledge, power, and very being to the beloved one. Being in love may be due to either of the two conditions. A superficial man or woman will experience a short period of being in love as he or she recovers from having fallen into it. A deeper one may continue being in love because of genuine dedication to the other person.

The Talmud (Sanhedrin 7a) puts it thus: "When our love was strong we could have slept on the edge of a sword. Now that our love is no more strong, a large abode would not be enough for us."

Love as the expression of identification creates intense loyalty to party, the ideals of which one shares, to the country with whose history and destiny one feels closely connected, to universal humanity whose misery (*weltschmerz*) one is unable to bear, and towards whose peace and happiness one feels impelled to work. The will for unity with all man is the ultimate expression of that identification with the present and the potential high level of peace and happiness of every human being.

God's love of man manifested itself in that He did not present him with a ready-to-use world but with an emergent creation. He bestowed upon him the great blessing and task of being a partner in the work of the beginning. God warned man "to work the earth and to guard it," to use both the raw material He had placed at his disposal and the mind and the skill with which He had endowed him. In the process the world would remove accidental impediments and those due to man's folly or quest for power.

God's love kept the high path toward happiness, security, perfection, before man's mind. The evil consequences which followed upon his abuse of his free will were meant to keep luminous before him the joy and the benefit of following the divine road. Every error of man, every selfish act, every short-sighted plan for self-aggrandizement without care for the improvement of the whole, not only kept man's moral stature down but kept God's world on a lower level.

For man to hear the voice of God and the direction for fulfillment of security and worthwhileness He chose the family of Abraham whose *raison d'être* should be the proclamation of this right way, who should be a blessing to the world and who should (in Nachmanides' version) graft the ideal upon the physical constitution of mankind. God wanted man to grow with each chapter in the world development. His love gave him a religion not of contentment and relaxation, but of constant challenge. God's love, as it were, was pained by man's zigzag course but though he would let him suffer the consequence of his folly of wickedness, he never allowed the vision of the ultimate to disappear from his view.

When the Chosen People became victims of their human nature and listened to lower schemes of happiness, the Lord sent them His spokesmen (the prophets) whose messages in language both tender and ruthless taught the inevitable consequence of wayward-

ness and the assurance of the eventual end when the earth will be full of the knowledge of God.

The dynamic quality of social imagination is the single hope for the gradual humanization of humanity. The challenge of a peaceful, classless society of brothers and sisters aiding each other out of love and giving each other the benefit of the doubt out of love should be answered through an abiding sense of interdependence bringing about the highest level of human life.

The elite of mankind was ever fired by that imagination and the righteous people among the nations of the world earned divine acceptance by listening to His voice and taking it to heart.

Thus God's love to man extends to all ages through the happy times of contentment as well as the despondency of defeat, never changing its tone, never ceasing its admonition, never diminishing the power of the beauty and sweetness of the ultimate accomplishment of a humane society. To the world of today God calls to use its ample blessings, its gifts of mind and beauty, its reservoirs of scholars, scientists and research men to bring health and hope to all His children, to raise the submerged two-thirds of mankind to a level where they can fill their vital needs, be assured of their rest, and happy in the consciousness that back of all the bewildering variety of phenomena is the Rock of Ages, whose voice has sounded from millennia and who will gather His people into His arms of mercy. When they are wise and good enough to heed His call, to abolish power dreams, tariffs and immigration quotas to lift the hearts of mankind up to the everlasting hills of God created, man earned, man worked salvation.

God's love for man is permanent, beneficial and ever manifest. Man's love for God is much more difficult of fulfillment. For our normal love takes the form of endearment, tenderness, and of bestowing kindness and benefits. But we cannot bestow any benefit on God. He is above the world of physical things to whom our

efforts could bring comfort or aid. Yet in a way He awaits our benefactions. As He created the light of the world, the rabbis said, He had in mind the light of the Messiah. The age of justice, genuine brotherhood, and unlimited love — any move in this direction brings the world of His original vision nearer. There is no noble, gentle, unselfish human attitude lost in His world. Every genuine movement in the direction of His guidance, the Torah, helps to benefit His plan for a happy humanity. No matter how high our scientists will reach in their space flights, they won't be able to practice righteousness or mercy in the inter-stellar space, to love God with all our heart and mind and soul means to be dedicated to the principles and ideals He has given to us in His self-revelation.

His revelation means the uncovering of His character to His children of all ages and climes — the true, the only God as far as human beings can comprehend it. It is manifest in His care and acts of justice and mercy. So that we love God truly by serving justice not for applause or gain or affluence or position, but because they are His qualities.

What we call the ceremonials, what laws and practice serve as symbols are but a system of training for gradual habituation to righteous and merciful thinking, approaching and acting.

This love of God binds us to no particular clime, limits us to no particular territory. It raises us above the humdrum meaningless individual world to a level where we act and live in the contemplation of His ultimate goal. As we love His goal, we love Him; as we approach by our consistently selfish effort His goal, we approach Him. As our whole life becomes merged in the chorus of the voices calling for holiness which means reverence, righteousness and mercy, we become merged in the total scheme of things. It is man's tremendous boon to be able to love God and to find his own highest level in the thought and practice thereof.

"The Lord has in this world only the four cubits of Halakhab", which means that God's ideals, His reality become concrete in the life of the individual who serves Him selflessly, nobly, righteously and lovingly.

Righteousness and kindness are mandatory from every human being toward every human being but complete dedication is closest among those held up by the conviction that they are serving together the love of God.

God's love of man expresses itself also in the built-in protection against such accidents as sickness and other mishaps: antibodies, the organic defense against invasion, the immunity against infection such as the medical journals describe in ever-increasing detail. On the principle of *Imitatio Dei*, imitation within the human framework of God's love, we should take care to provide a built-in protection of human happiness, peace and security. It has been, however, our most lamentable failure.

In 1962, two-thirds of mankind are still living on a sub-human level. Our capacity for producing food, shelter, education for all human beings is wellnigh unlimited. But our love of man has lagged miserably behind that capacity. Most of the revolutions of bloodshed and hatred of the modern world are due to this stupid selfishness of homo sapiens.

Wherever a catastrophic consequence of indifference to our brother's plight is not properly perceived, impetuous attacks are being made on God's justice "because He allows so much human sorrow." In this connection, an experience of the present writer may not be irrelevant:

A few years ago I had delivered the invocation at an annual meeting of an American medical association. When it was over, a physician, sitting next to me on the dais said, "Rabbi, this was a beautiful, poetic address, but how can you explain God's love in the light of what we know about the ravages of cancer?" This was

my answer. "We are sitting in the financial capital of the richest country in the history of the world. This year's budget for the expenditures of past, and the prevention of future wars, amounted to \$47,000,000,000. In the last generation modern research and devotion have succeeded in stamping out most of the deadly diseases that have ravaged mankind. Our annual expenditure for cancer research does not yet amount to \$5,000,000. Had we spent one percent of what our budget devotes to war for the establishment and maintenance of institutions for the study of cancer, we might be now, with the help of God and as the harvest of widespread thorough-going effort, have discovered the nature of cancer, its cause and cure. God's love, by endowing us with great mental ability, has provided us with the means of achieving it. We must never permit ourselves to argue against His providence for our failure to live up to His divine command."

"Work this potential Garden of Eden and guard it." For this earth was given to us, not only as a gift but as a task. Today initial plans have been laid for providing future fuel needs by the human race through atomic power. There is as yet another inexhaustible source of energy; that which at present causes the disaster of earthquakes. One of these days human research devoted not to gain alone but to making this world a source of peace and abiding security will learn how to channel the billions of heat energies in the crust of our globe; to provide through them the needs of all God's children who now shiver in cold and suffer the pangs of hunger and are deprived of those vital benefits which the Omniscient, Omnipotent, all loving Father of mankind, has stored in this planet, charging the wisdom, the character and the benevolence of its best minds and hearts to capture, hold and employ for all people.

God's love of man both in its positive and negative aspects still deserves to remain the major concern of mankind.

This love of God for man manifests itself in granting him the capacity for moral judgment. The last chapters of the Book of Job describe His tender care for all life. Undoubtedly, animals have consciousness and awareness, but it is only man that can be aware of harmony, whose artistic sense makes him thrill to a wondrous sunset, achieve profound happiness through Beethoven's symphonies and lose himself in the contemplation of Michaelangelo's Moses.

His imagination describes to him, not only uncharted chapters of his future, but his social awareness creates in him a profound sense of sympathy, empathy and oneness with his fellowman everywhere. His studied judgment creates moral values, truth and beauty from Abraham's blessing for all mankind to the preview of Isaiah's time of the Messiah.

Saadia Gaon eliminated from his Siddur the last lines of the *I'E-I barukh* the words *or badash al Tzion ta-ir*, feeling that that prayer was addressed to the Universal Giver of light and should not be narrowed to the light of Zion, no matter how glorious. Saadia was logically right and psychologically wrong, for it has been the genius of our sacred literature to integrate the national with the universal, to find God's love in the beauty — physical or moral — of any human being, in the vision of the ocean of snow-capped peaks on any continent, in the Cedars of Lebanon, in the dew on Mt. Herman or in the wondrous formation of the mountains near the Dead Sea.

God's love of man manifests itself in his unfolding before us the marvels of His universe, the mathematical perfection of the astral world, the unconquered vista of the Himalayas, the majestic sweep of the Amazon River and the incredible, functional perfection of the human body.

The mystery of pain has evoked deep meditation and has been the subject of many books and pamphlets to justify the ways of God and explain the discipline of sorrow. But the greater mystery

is that of utter painlessness. In spite of the elaborate physical and chemical processes involved in food intake, metabolism, digestion and absorption, we suffer neither pain nor discomfort.

God's love of man is especially manifested in the pleasures — physical and emotional — derived from the satisfaction of his biological needs of eating, drinking, sleeping and loving. Child-bearing used to be the exception but its pangs promise to be eliminated in the near future by a judicious and skillful use of drugs and program of exercise. (Indeed the original meaning of *be-etzev teldi banim* usually translated as "*in pain shalt thou bring forth children*" in the progressive revelation of the Biblical texts seems due for a new interpretation. The word *etzev* — as seen from a comparison with authentic arabic philology of the prophetic phrase *habbur atzavim Efrayim* — indicates its root to mean creative, aesthetic work, so that future commentators may translate the verse to read: "*for creative work of fashioning their personalities shalt thou bring forth children.*") But whatever pain parturition has involved in the past was more than compensated for by the ineffable joy the young mother felt as she saw, touched, listened to the words of her baby, fruit of her own body that held intimate promise for his future.

God's love of man is shown also in the happiness derived from purposeful work. When Adam was ejected from Paradise, he was profoundly despondent. But, say the rabbis, when he heard the divine order, "*in the sweat of thy brow shalt thou eat thy bread*" his mind became calm and contented. Great is work, says the Talmud, for it honors man as it warms him. From the farmer's deep satisfaction with the harvest of his toil to the scientist's serene contemplation of the stellar world through the instruments he has devised or improved, there is the exquisite happiness of achievement.

For a long time the world view has no more been geo-centric. Today we recognize our earth to be only one of the globes, of which there are countless numbers in the intimate galaxies of

the world. Man continues to be the center of things. Life is still anthropocentric and will stay so until we are invited to a meeting in outer space of the inter-stellar academies, including all the imaginable scientists on other planets and stars unless they turn out to be robots equipped with detachable, exchangeable, and illimitable facilities and physical power. We are the heirs and beneficiaries of God's great love which is the source of the ingenuity of human minds and the stirring challenge to the noblest hearts of every age from Moses, Isaiah and Hillel in the Jewish history, to Lincoln, Newton and Ghandi in the larger world.

God's love of man in granting him understanding of spiritual awareness, in keeping him cognizant of classless and warless humanity, inspires him with hope under most adverse circumstances. It helps him to defeat life's shadows by the conviction of an ultimate guiding light.

OF LOVE AND KNOWLEDGE

I

Concerning five kinds of love were the children of Israel commanded in the Holy Torah:

The love of God in Debarim VI, 5

The love of Torah in Jeremiah XVI, 11

The love of the Holy Land in Debarim VIII, 10

The love of the people of Israel in Vayikra XIX, 18

The love of the fellow-man in Vayikra XIX, 26.

II

Thou shalt *know* it today and take it to thy heart that the Eternal is The God in the heavens above and on the earth below. There is none else. *The Alenu Prayer of the Siddur.*

Thou hast been made to see so that thou mayest *know* that the Eternal is The God, there is none else. *Debarim IV, 35.*

Thou favorest man with *knowledge* and teachest mortals understanding. *The Amidah of the Siddur*

And the earth will be full of the *knowledge* of God even as the waters cover the sea. *Isaiah XI, 9*

Immanuel Kant, in his "Theory of Ethics",¹ makes this statement: "Morality is not properly the doctrine how we should make ourselves happy, but how we become worthy of happiness . . . A man is worthy to possess a thing or state when his possession of it is in harmony with the *summum bonum*, (the supreme good). All worthiness depends on moral conduct." "The moral laws lead to religion, i. e., to the recognition of all duties as divine commands." Long before, the first Hebrew, Abraham, had proclaimed justice as the basis of life (*tsaddik yessod olam*), in his bold challenge of his Lord: "*Shall the Judge of all the earth not do justly?*" Without Him, as source and guardian of justice, life has no meaning.²

The Kantian over-emphasis on justice implies a denigration of love: "One must live a moral life only out of a sense of duty." in the Torah, justice forms the basic assurance of a minimum to every human being, on which a maximum of blessed (kindness) and rahamim (unselfish love, literally: mother love) shall be developed, forming together the synthesis of *Imitatio Dei* (the imitation, within the human frame, of His qualities). The distinction between love not based on justice and the latter as the foundation of the good life is hinted at in Proverbs (XIV, 34) *Justice* X

(as basis) *uplifts a people, but love of nations* (unsecured as to its objectivity and permanency by justice) *will stay a failure.*

Justice is objective, an all embracing, ever-valid principle, the minimum assurance of fair play and security, the minimum demand for individual worth and collective culture. Justice is not only, as with Thomas B. Macaulay, "far-sighted policy," a type of diplomatic cleverness, statesman-like sound investment or profitable attitude. "Its power is greater and its behest is independent of any one else's reaction." Whether our neighbors repay our own fair treatment of them by righteous dealings with us, or subject us to ruthless power politics; whether our just behavior elicits similar conduct from fellow humans or not, justice must be pursued at all costs! Even "an eye for an eye"³ in its original Semitic meaning represents a tremendous advance on the normal heathen reaction which demanded the eyes of all the alien tribe for the loss of one eye sustained by one kinsman. Only "*one tooth for a tooth*" and not the Fascist's "one set of teeth" for one lost by a party member! In Jewish law, however, that ancient phrase "*An eye for an eye*" has completely different meaning. It stipulates financial compensation for the loss of one eye, for the loss of one tooth. On the basis of justice there must be exact valuation, neither partisan exaggeration of the monetary loss sustained by an insider, nor discriminatory devaluation — of a negro's, a heathen's, any outsider's damage sustained. The overriding fundamental principle is justice.

On the basis of justice for all, "*the stranger and the home-born, the rich and the poor,*" on the achievement of universal rectitude, one may build up one's personal love, a subjective sentiment. The Torah's timeless teaching: "*ve-ahavta le-reakha*" (*love thy neighbor*) derives from the constitutional fact "*kamokha*" that "*he is like thee*", created in the image of God-designed equality, entitled to fundamental, alienable rights and privileges.

"Eye for eye" in *Mosaic Law*. Further, nothing can illustrate the fundamental difference of the legal systems of these

two peoples better than their different application of the law of taliation, or the rule of "measure for measure." The enunciation of the principle of "*life for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth*", is today recognized as one of the most far-reaching steps in human progress. It means the substitution of legal punishment, and as far as possible the exact equivalent of the injury, in place of wild revenge. It is the spirit of equity. The Church Father, Augustine, was one of the first to declare that taliation was a law of justice, not of hatred; one eye, not two, for an eye; one tooth, not ten, for a tooth; one life, not a whole family, for a life. The founders of International Law — Hugo Grotius, Jean Bodin, and John Selden — all maintain that the rule "eye for an eye" enjoins, on the one hand, that a fair and equitable relation must exist between the crime and the punishment; and, on the other hand, that all citizens are equal before the law, and that the injuries of *all* be valued according to the same standard. "It is a law appropriate only for free peoples" — said one of the pioneers of modern Bible exegesis, John D. Michaelis — "in which the poorest inhabitant has the same rights as his most aristocratic assailant... It deems the tooth of the poorest peasant as valuable as that of the nobleman; strangely so, because the peasant must bite crust, while the nobleman eats cake." Of course, in primitive society there was great danger of this principle becoming petrified into a hard and fast rule of terrible cruelty. In the Mosaic Law, however, monetary commutation had already begun. This is seen from the prohibition of accepting money compensation for malicious murder: "*Ye shall take no ransom for the life of a murderer, that is guilty of death*" (Numbers XXXV, 31). The literal application of "eye for eye, tooth for tooth" was excluded in Rabbinic Law; and there is no instance in Jewish history of its literal application ever having been carried out.⁴

Love, as a superstructure on the rock of justice, is capable of tremendous achievement, culminating in self-sacrificing devotion to another human's happiness. Love, as the basis of life, by its very subjectiveness, uncontrolled by the ideal of the *summum bonum* of righteousness, (the divine principle) would inevitably tend to arbitrariness, according to the taste, viewpoint, prejudices, traumas of the individual, resulting in the Greek scene in Plato's three classes of citizens and in the arbitrary distinctions and discriminations consequent on such classification.

Thoroughly schooled in its disciplines, Jehudah Halevy,⁵ in his *Kuzari*, emphasized the limits of philosophy and castigated the self-satisfaction of his colleagues. The following excerpt from the text of the *Kuzari* is illustrative:

63. The Rabbi: There is an excuse for the Philosophers. Being Grecians, science and religion did not come to them as inheritances. They belong to the descendants of Japhet, who inhabited the north, whilst that knowledge coming from Adam, and supported by the divine influence, is only to be found among the progeny of Shem, who represented the successors of Noah and constituted, as it were, his (Noah's) essentiality. This knowledge has always been connected with this core, and will always remain so. The Greeks only received it, when they became powerful, from Persia. The Persians had it from the Chaldeans. It was only then that the famous (Greek) Philosophers arose, but as soon as Rome assumed political leadership they produced no philosopher worthy of the name.

64. Al Khazari: Does this mean that Aristotelian philosophy is not deserving of credence?

65. The Rabbi: Certainly. He exerted his mind, because he had no tradition from any reliable source at his disposal. He meditated on the beginning and end of the world, but

found as much difficulty in the theory of a beginning as in that of eternity. Finally, these abstract speculations which made for eternity, prevailed, and he found no reason to inquire into the chronology or derivation of those who lived before him. Had he lived among a people with well-authenticated and generally acknowledged traditions, he would have applied his deductions and arguments to establish the theory of creation, however difficult, instead of eternity, which is even much more difficult to accept.

16. Al-Khazari: Now I understand the difference between *E-lohim* and *Adonai*, and I see how far the God of Abraham is different from that of Aristotle. Man yearns for Adonai as a matter of love, taste, and conviction; whilst attachment to E-lohim is the result of speculation. A feeling of the former kind invites its votaries to give their life His sake, and to prefer death to His absence. Speculation, however, makes veneration only a necessity as long as it entails no harm, but bears no pain for its sake. I would therefore, excuse Aristotle for thinking lightly about the observation of the law, since he doubts whether God has any cognizance of it.

III

Hasdai Crescas,⁶ connoisseur of both Aristotle and his disciple Maimonides, offered trenchant criticism of the former and affectionate disagreement with the latter.

"Many of our people have presumed a vision in dreams and foreign vanities. Even the great ones among our sages have been attracted to their (the philosophers') words and have adorned themselves with their arguments and proofs. Among them the sublime master, our Teacher, Rabbi Moses ben Maimon, who, notwithstanding the greatness of his mind and his all-embracing knowledge of the Talmud, found

good reasoning in the works of the philosophers and their statements. Indeed, they enticed him, so that he made of their weak premises veritable pillars and fundamentals of the Torah.

I should like to make clear however that the Master does by no means oppose the bases of the faith. But whilst we love his words and even his causeries, we love truth more!" (From the introduction to his magnum opus.)

In Halevy's animadversions, as in Crescas' respectful strictures, the basic point of discussion was the relation between knowledge and love in man's association with his fellow man, as well as in man's connection with his Creator.

To the categories of *Shilton Ha-Sekhel* (the rule or primacy of the intellect) and *Shilton ha-Yosher* (the rule or primacy of righteousness), one might fitly add *Shilton ha-Ahavah* (the rule or primacy of love) as they appear in that perennial debate.

In the sacred literature of our people, prophecy complemented the work of the intellect. Intellect alone would never have penetrated even the periphery of the mystery of God. Only through the sources of divine love was the prophet able to gain an understanding of ultimate verities and ethico-spiritual values. Crescas' "*Or Adonai*" complements Rambam's "*Moreh*" and "*Deot*" alike. In the dramatic midrashic elaboration of the verse in Mishle (Proverbs),⁷ God consults the Torah before the creation of the world (potentially the fulfillment of His plan for the humanization of humanity). Was it an academic consultation on the divine level? Or was it divine social engineering? Or, was there the pre-vision of *Hashgabah peratit* (Providence), guiding man, without forcing him, in the direction of ultimate messianic harmony?

The intellectualist Rambam did not envision the problem as Crescas embraced it: "To the omniscience of the perfect God, no particular 'purpose or project' could have arisen at any particular

time." In the Maimonidian coinage, such a positive attribute of God would have been implied in our attempt to comprehend His 'project' and would therefore ascribe anthropomorphic qualities to Him.⁸

Crescas sees creation as an endless process and infinite harvest of His love. Indeed, the "*Imitatio Dei*", (The Imitation of God) which the Torah demands, described only the attitude of such creative love towards every one of His children. Such creative love, an emanation of God-like power, of the God-like property of every soul, knows no limitation, geographical, racial, or social.

Rav Ashi had that in mind, when, in reaction to R. Hamnuna's anger against Babylonian oppressors of his people, he confessed: "I do not understand my colleague's sentiment; I bless them all, Jews and non-Jews, even the cruel heathen."⁹

Crescas quoted both commandments: "*Thou shalt love the Lord thy God*"¹⁰ and "*Thou shalt know Him*"¹¹ and did not hesitate to ascribe primacy to the first, even as Rambam did not hesitate to define it in intellectual terms, called much later the "intellectual love of God."

Thomas Aquinas, who, through his teacher, Albertus Magnus, owed much to Rambam,¹² nonetheless followed Crescas in his declaration that to love God is better than to know Him. When Diotima¹³ told Socrates that love is a philosopher, she may have essayed a compromise. Plato's "Symposium" stressed with precious clarity that just as the lover craves harmonious union with the one he loves, so does the "knower" seek intellectual union with the subject of his knowledge.

The Hebrew language, through encouragement of the full apprehension of *one* word, suggests the depth of the problem. "*Heabex*" means to "possess something" and to "be possessed" by it: as one reaches mastery of affection or apprehension, one is mastered by the object involved. How poor, in comparison, sounds

Aristipp's boast about the woman of his love: "*Echo ouk echomai* — I have but I am not had."¹⁴

The rabbis, from the time of the Mishnah to the author of "*Hafetz Hayyim*" of our century, have striven to achieve knowledge as love of God, even as they have endeavored, in their personal lives and letters, to know their fellow-men and to love them.

The relation between these two, love and knowledge, is the subject of the present study and may, perchance, serve as an epilogue to "Heroes of the Spirit," the last of the three biographical volumes of "The Jewish Library."

The knowledge of God may come as the result of contemplation, prolonged and concentrated; as an appreciation of His infinite wisdom, derived from the phenomena and processes of His infinite world; as an intuitive revelation, vouchsafed in moments of ecstasy; as the harvest of devout immersion in the timeless texts of our sacred literature. King David found such knowledge in the marvelous order of the astral world ("*When I behold thy heavens, the work of thy hands . . .*").¹⁵ Rabbi Israel Meir ha-Cohen of Radin (the saint and sage, venerated as the author of "*Hafetz Hayyim*", one of the noblest works of rabbinic literature) cherished it as the spirit of the Lord, revealed in the sublime level of Jewish social ethics.¹⁶

Neither mind nor heart, unsided, could offer enough light in the quest for such knowledge. Only the combination of intellectual and emotional approaches, within their limitations, could lead to some rewarding goal in the progress towards *Da'at Elokim* (the knowledge of God). The mind would search for every avenue that may widen or deepen the horizon for an ultimate comprehension of the glory of God, while the heart would crave a vision of His justice, mercy, and creative love to bless its hopes, stir its resolves, and spur its ceaseless longing for an embracement of His spirit.

One may, by painstaking study of the character and personality of another, reach such total appreciation of the object of his thought, that the ensuing predictability of his conduct, crowning the original appreciation, leads to a relationship that may be termed "love." Thus the sentiment of love may be derived from a profound and steady awareness of a strong, noble character. Frequently, love springs from the synthesis of intellectual admiration and emotional acceptance. Abstractly, one person may love humanity; concretely, one individual may love another. Abstract emotion is found in the happy affection an adult feels for childhood, since this represents in charming form a universal group experience during which there is a feeling of man's infinite potentiality. The optimistic prediction would emphasize the hope that under normal circumstances the children will become adults possessed with ultimate moral and spiritual decencies. Moreover, the love of children generically or the love bestowed upon an individual youngster, frequently presents a compensatory expectation of personality fulfillment, most salubrious to the sorrow of one's private or public frustrations.

Normal love between men or women has intellectual or emotional roots and represents personality appreciation. The question of primacy is not vital, because a simultaneous inner movement towards total affection, in which both share, is quite within the range of possibility. The highest form of love between members of different sexes has both elements that are bridged by the unity of ethical or spiritual values. This unfailingly results in a comradeship, engendered by the endeavor to achieve these values, whether they be academic, social, patriotic, or artistic. The unavoidable resignation of mature persons may often be due to deep awareness of the discrepancy between their actual position and the goal towards which they are striving. However, as they work together toward that distant goal, their attachment for each other is deepened. Potent intellectual or emotional elements may manifest

themselves as the man and the woman become immersed in their reverence for the cosmos, the shared Socratic *daimonion*, or the revelation of the interdependence of human happiness, justice and eternal peace. Intuitive awareness of the uncharted regions of a man or woman's personality may open up a vista, a total or vital comprehension, which would be denied to any piece-meal search of a probing mind. The Greek "*prosopon*"¹⁷ presumes a universal human type, whose naturalized form, the Jewish "*partzuf*",¹⁸ in the rabbinic adage, insists on the utter uniqueness of every child of God. Therefore, before one can accept or reject a fellow human being, he must have an understanding of him. So that, knowledge and love would appear postulated as partners.

Love may move from the level of sex attraction to the selfless devotion of "*rahamanut*" or "motherliness," which seeks to spend its powers, understanding, and knowledge for the benefit of the helpless infant; it may grow from passionate desire to passionate self-sacrifice. As *Imitatio Dei*, such *rahamanut* is accorded the supreme quality of *Kedushah* or holiness, whose ingredients are reverence for personality, righteousness of act and attitude, and the crowning glory of mother-love.

What Seneca had proclaimed about knowledge: "Were wisdom granted to me on condition that I keep it to myself, I would refuse it!", applies doubly to the quality of love. Baco of Verulam's "*Tantum enim possumus quantum scimus*" (our potency is limited to our knowledge), could fitly be applied to love: only insofar as we love, do we understand God or man or even animals. For *rahamanut* (unselfish motherly love) extends to all life. Knowledge may be the result of search propelled by love and the Talmud emphasizes¹⁹ the consequence: the prohibition, on biblical authority, of any unnecessary infliction of pain on the animal, for "*His mercies are over all His creatures*,"²⁰ the decisive word "*rahama*" emphasizing the devoted care that would prevent cruelty to any living thing.

IV

The knowledge of God has been the perennial subject of philosophical and theological interest.²¹ Its relation to the love of Him has challenged and enchanted commentators on Holy Writ, students of the Talmud of all ages and, in particular, the masters of medieval Jewish thought, as well as scholars of the last few centuries. The "marvel of self-love" has been investigated also by the great teachers of Hassidism, with *Israel Ba'al Shem Tov* at their head. How remarkable is the devotion, the indefatigable sustained effort of an individual for what he considers his welfare! Yet he is not unaware of his shortcomings, of the trickery he employs in the advance of his aims, of the uncontrolled temper he displays when he even only suspects an assault on his possessions or his dignity or his comfort: "This is the meaning of the radical law, '*Love thy neighbor as thyself*'",²² said Rabbi Israel. "Ignore his shortcomings as you ignore your own! Go to all lengths to excuse, or explain, or account for, his action or attitude which at first displease you, even as you find reasons, excuses, justifications for your own acts or attitudes which obviously are far from right! Try to know him in his frailty as you know yourself, and thus extend love to him!"

The love of man for woman is referred to in the fourth chapter of Bereshith in these words: "*And Adam knew his wife Eve and she became a mother and bore a son.*"²³ They have ever been animadverted on, illustrated and compared with biblical texts on this subject. The mystic adumbrations of Torah and prophet, the symbolical interpretations of the "Song of Songs", the sage and reverent observations of the rabbis in Talmud and Midrash, have all deepened and broadened the understanding of love. But, above all, it has been the relation of man's love for woman and his understanding of her, in their interpenetration, that have challenged and enriched the searcher and have been of enduring influence upon thoughtful lovers and students of love in all ages.

In the fabric of the patterns of religious life, there has been an unchanging analogy: love of man, knowledge of fellow man, of man for woman and woman for man on one level, and love of God, knowledge of God, understanding of His way with man, on the higher one.

Righteousness as the law of life (in all nuances: from conformity to moral law to a steady endeavor to bridge the gap between the legal paragraph and the postulates of equity) depends on some basic knowledge of both matter and manner, some fundamental understanding, even in every business enterprise. The technical term again is *da'at*, meaning, literally, "knowledge" and spelling here "agreement as to fundamentals," a meeting by the minds of purchaser as well as buyer as to their intention and mutual desire to consummate the deal on the basis of shared knowledge and understanding as to what, when, and how, is to be sold.²⁴ Such *da'at* is essential also for the validity of labor-contracts, as of communal, national or international negotiation.²⁵ The very term "*re'a*" (fellow-man), one of the major contributions of our sacred heritage to the common treasury of man and at the very base of the Torah's social ethics, etymologically implies community of thought, *da'at*.²⁶ The knowledge of the human situation, conveying sympathy through empathy, is meant to lead to concrete measures, in law and social custom, for the correction of communal abuses and the promotion of communal harmony. The obligation to remain conscious of this goal as well as of the wellnigh impassable distance of its achievement, is meant to offer challenge and promise to those of His children as love the Lord of the universe and seek to know the Father of every human being.

V

To seek to know the mind of God, asserts Saadya²⁷ amounts to no less than to seek to be God. For His mind and His knowledge are not only quantitatively but especially qualitatively different

from, and unreachable by, human beings. The emphasis on His moral qualities, as revealed in the Theophanies which Moses, Isaiah, David, and Job, were granted, prepares for the interrelation, if not interdependence, of knowledge and love.

Which is primary? In the deepest sense, one ensues from, encourages the other. Love serves as a fountain of intuition, cognition, growing awareness, occasional ecstatic vision.²⁸ Knowledge seeks the nearness, penetrates the approach, yearns for concrete embracement, of His mind, His infinite goodness, His pervading and elusive Essence. For the interhuman situation, there is a fascinating analogy, in man-woman seeking, knowing, loving. In the light of that analogy, the timeless interpretation of the "Song of Songs" as a dialogue between the loving, searching bride, the chosen people, and the loving God as Israel's Friend and Guide, as Creator of their philosophy of life, seems less abstruse and evidences a deeper comprehension of that indentification than millennial epistemological adventures have ever achieved.

All the mystery of the human personality notwithstanding, an ultimate understanding between loving husband and wife is well within the realms of probability.

Here love and knowledge result in an interpenetration of emotional and intellectual fulfillment. But in the other realm, that of God-seeking, God-loving, God-knowing, there remains an unbridgeable gap because of which full achievement stays beyond the levels, no matter how high, of the human mind. The IMITATIO DEI even in the moral and spiritual sphere, is the supreme goal that can but summon His children, which they, indeed, feel bound to reach for, but the complete attainment of which, by even their noblest, wisest, deepest personalities, stays impossible. However, it is never a hopeless enterprise, for the very process of that quest exerts profound influence on the devout climbers towards the peak of that "mountain of the Lord." There remains a solid good: whilst a perfect human personality has not as yet appeared,

the search for God, on the wings of love for Him, may extend and deepen, far beyond present levels, a vision or even a calm perception of the absolute, perfect, timeless Being.

Man will be forced to resign himself to the great gap between him and the knowledge of God, His nature or His essence.

VI

Genuine love implies self-identification with the beloved.²⁹ It is empathy in its deepest form. Total response to another, releases intuitive energies, opens up new horizons, and leads to a fuller knowledge of an essence than otherwise possible. The intimate relation between the object seen, the act of seeing, and the personality of the observer,³⁰ may serve as illustration, however imperfect. In the confluence of intellectual and emotional love, through the interaction and interdependence of the persons, or person and object, involved, the frontiers of love and knowledge coalesce.³¹ On that level, the love of God and the love of one's fellow human, including the love between members of the two sexes, invite analogy, if not identification. Both the mystery and the rational approach are found in Ibn Ezra's interpretations of the Song of Songs, a non-theological, but philosophical and philological reading of that *megillah*.³²

The love of the adult for an infant derives not only from the wonder of its body, its incipient movements, its efforts to penetrate with tiny fingers into reality, but from conscious, half-conscious, or unconscious identification, to some degree, with the infinite potentialities of every baby; partly as compensation for one's frustration,³³ as inchoate hope for the solution of the problems perceived in maturity, but more so out of realization of the need to resign oneself to a distance off one's own goals and to attach oneself to as yet unspelled-out expectation that the chances for self-fulfillment or self-realization will increase for the personality

unfolding with the infant's every hour. The contemplative awareness of this untapped energy, not-yet-arrived opportunity, of his emergent intellectual and emotional riches, becomes a subterranean source of the emotional energies which feed the love of general and individual infancy and childhood. Here again, the line between intuition and rational enterprise is thin, indeed, and they promote each other.

Mature love between the sexes, too, is the fruit of knowledge: first a kind of revelation of personality, conveyed through eyes, ears and the thinking processes which eventually integrate sensation into judgment. Just as vision, appreciation and depth-knowledge of character call forth love, so is the search for knowledge that is comprehensive and penetrative the fruit of love.

The passionate and persistent seeking of a deeper apprehension of God's attributes as accessible to human search and yearning, has its human counterpart in the zealous exploration of every facet of the beloved person, so that love may end and reach fulfillment in the full knowledge of, dedication and surrender of one's self to, the beloved. For the interpretation of this total search, the languages and the images of philosophy, poetry, mystic vision and rational definition, are complementary. Only the sum of all the ways of love and knowledge in search and aid of each other, will represent the whole beauty and power of the polar tendencies meeting in the mystery.

The normal assumption that knowledge leads to love has its variations from Plotinus's ecstatic vision to Bergson's intellectual sympathy.³⁴ The awareness that love leads to knowledge has its mystic approach as well as its erotic assertion. The Biblical "*And Adam knew his wife Eve and she bore a child*" has evoked the latter interpretation. The translation of Socrates' Ethos into Plato's *logos*³⁵ stimulated similar consideration. The vision of transcendent beauty is as much the fruit of the former as of the latter. In the myths of the latter's dialogues and epistles, the two realms are

at least adumbrated, at best portrayed with rare insight and brilliance.³⁶ It is knowledge which opposes sophistry through the love it begets. It is love which encourages the search for the *summum bonum*, the vision of which has rendered it more dynamic.³⁷ The pursuit of both is an ongoing process, a *birkhat gomlim*,³⁸ *hashpa-at gomlim*, impervious, on its proper level, to both the cynic's sport and the boor's clumsiness. The good and the beautiful may be reached by parallel ways meeting in the infinity of the *kalos-kagathos*. The platonic opposition to dualism and to a superficial monism seems to stress the essential need of this checks-and-balances program on the way towards knowledge leading to love and based on knowledge.

Max Scheler³⁹ quotes Goethe's dictum: "One does not acquire knowledge except of that which one loves, and the deeper and fuller the knowledge is to become, the stronger, more powerful and more vivid, must the love thereof, yea, the passion thereof be," and Leonardo da Vinci, who states that love is the daughter of a great perception (intuition or knowledge). The primacy varies from the former to the latter. Pascal⁴⁰ on grounds as emotional as philosophical, identifies love with reason. Judgments as to ethical primacy, too, will affect the cause and effect suggestion in the achievement. (Scheler's brief but profound essay on the subject should offer fresh light, although his interpretation has some neophyte tendencies in need of correction.)

The Hebrew "*beahav*"⁴¹ as indicated above, suggests that we possess what we love and are possessed thereby, a pregnant interpretation of the mutuality of the love-knowledge relation.

Erotic love, a source of perpetuation, may promote the chances of perfect knowledge through the observation of the child's movement towards refinement, the increasing perception thereof strengthening the lover's awareness, assets, and position. The "collective" unconscious" of Carl G. Jung,⁴² the Hindu idea of love as the intellectual recognition of the unity of being,⁴³ the trend towards

each other of the lovers' originally unseparated entities, all represent nuances in the search for expression of the primeval relation. One may perchance find anticipation of this idea in the Midrashic concept of the original andro-gynic man.⁴⁴

VII

Man in his love of God seeks to complement his own happiness by more knowledge through love, more love through increasing knowledge. But God's love of man, as recorded to Moses, as emphasized by the prophets and by their disciples, the Sages of the Agadah, has only one purpose: the promotion — without determinative affection of his freedom of will — of man's happiness through increasing perfection of character and personality. The divine element in man is to lead not only the individual Jewish soul towards ever higher levels, but to aid every fellow-man in such an upward climb. The supreme human vision of God will hence be achieved not by intellectual effort, but through identification with, dedication to, and consistent striving after, God's aim for the happiness and moral self-realization of man. That principle has been the essence of Jeremiah's radical assertion: all search for the essence of God must remain ever unsuccessful, both, because of the limitations of the human mind and the utter inaccessibility, to time-and-space-bound endeavor, of the Creator. No world-escaping hermit is granted a deeper vision, no philosopher worshipping the Absolute, can penetrate the mystery of His being. The knowledge of God, within the frame of human potentiality, is achievable only through the imitation of His ethical qualities conveyed through His revelation, even Justice and Compassion. The word "Tzedek" is a homonym, including both. Both are manifested by the assumption and discharge of social responsibility, by dynamic, wise love of one's fellow-man, by loving identification with his problems and by empathy with his fallible weakness. Righteousness governs not only one's actions as to personal honest, normal

juridical relations, it also stirs up and sustains profound indignation, protesting and battling every manifestation of "*hamass*" (violence or oppression in any form). Compassion again creates and sustains attitude and conduct on the levels of "*Lifnim mishurat ha-Din* (generous equity)," "*Kiddush hashem*" (morally sublime action inspired by the purpose of sanctifying His Name — a unique and supreme Jewish virtue), "*ahavat binnam*" (general love of humans without specific cause, gratuitous love), because of one or all of which a person would forego his or her legal or technical advantage for the love of God and man, the fruit at once of pure altruism and pure worship of God.

One will never know God through either mere intellectual endeavor, or through mere emotional identification with His spirit. It is only by passionate love of and work for the widow and the orphan, the alien and every one else who is underprivileged that one's knowledge of Him may reach the human peak. There were the twelve precious jewels attached to the four rows of the breast plate of the High Priest. The Four Turim (rows or volumes) comprising the totality of Jewish law find their crowning complementation in The Hoshen Mishpat, "The Breastplate of Justice," the last part of the authoritative but ever unfinished "Prepared Table" (Shulhan Arukh), Rabbi Joseph Karo's Code.

Righteousness alone, all its assets notwithstanding, will not bring about, nor express, full knowledge or love of Him. Just as epistemology, with all its keen and wholesome insights, as its ultimate harvest, offers essentially but a sense of our mental limitations, so mere righteousness does not encompass the full program of the Holy Torah.

Optimistic views as to cause and effect in political affairs may endorse the merit, essential and timeless, of right conduct. It is true that to the student of the Torah, justice is much more, indeed, the basic principle of religion and of the good life it enjoins and inspires. Nor is it necessary to emphasize again that without

justice neither religion nor human existence are left with any meaning. But justice is only a basis and its very flowering depends upon the steady functioning, in thought, sentiment and practical conduct, of other ethical potencies.

VIII

It is the expected mutuality of justice which we have recognized as at once its major asset and its major liability. For teaching "*Tzaddik yessod olam* (the righteous is the foundation of the world)" in all its interpretations abounding in rabbinic literature emphasizes that even if no mutuality were expectable, even when the just person would meet with dismaying ingratitude or unrighteous response to his righteous action, for him the principle must retain all its pristine cogency and power and his actions must remain righteous and compassionate. On the common level, as a mere wise policy, we have seen it as essentially selfish because reward-promising. Since Bahya ibn Pakudah we have accepted his position, i. e. that for the development and achievement of an ethical personality one must recognize rewards and punishments, with all their solid attractiveness and deterrent effect respectively, as but a device of an educational method for the morally as yet immature, most intelligible and appreciated in the light of the Aristotelian principle of the process of habituation, but both non-vital consequences of conduct and both of negative effect on the fruition of moral ideals.

The just person who is aware and hopeful of proper reaction to, or reward for his equitable and/or charitable deeds, does not possess a knowledge of God's character, sufficiently dynamic to achieve the requisite quality and measure of *Imitatio Dei*. For God's mercy is self-propelled, an expression of His moral Being, absolute, because above any expectancy of reward or possibility of benefit or improvement through such recompense for His goodness and justice. The prophet Isaiah proclaimed it in one verse (50a):

"*Ha-e-l ha-kaddosh nikdash bitzedakah*" — The Holy God is sanctified by His righteousness.

It is only through dedicated attention to the helpless, the sick, the forlorn, that fuller awareness of His goodness is evidenced. It is only when the human act or attitude is "absolute," which, in this context, above all means "independent of, above and untouched by," any positive or negative reaction that man reaches out towards His revealed quality.

Finally, this knowledge of God is the only true chance for self-knowledge. As striving and triumphant, or defeated and frustrated, angry or satisfied humans, we know only part of our own potentiality. A mother, genuinely *rahamanah*, discovers bottomless qualities in herself. Serenity is the fruit of the pleasure of a good deed. The patient attitude and consistent loyalty in performing a good deed opens up new horizons of one's personality, and reveals new depths of understanding. Intellectual achievement, too, gives one pleasure. Emotional excitement has its own satisfactions, but the consciousness of having succeeded in solving the problems of one's fellow man by our unselfish endeavor, of having corrected his errors with a minimum of embarrassment and a maximum of encouragement for him, widens and deepens one's sense of human interdependence and quickens one's *joie de vivre*.

It is the creative quality of mercy that crowns justice and through the buoyant effect on fellow-man, reveals his, as it does one's own, fuller stature.

There seems to be a congenital inconsistency in many thinkers. Speaking in rabbinic terms: they will reject on principle as *psbat*⁵¹ (simple meaning of the text), what they will admit as *derash* (homiletical or ad hoc interpretation). In the effort to establish the simple text meaning, for the definition of principle, they will often be harsh and uncompromising philologists, only to employ the emotional, homiletical, metaphysical interpretation in another connection. Elsewhere⁵² I have shown it in connection

with R. Simeon bar Yohai's interpretation of Genesis VI, 4. One may find it in R. Jacob Emden's apparently ambivalent attitude to the book of Zohar.⁵³ I should like to point out a not too dissimilar phenomenon in the fifth book of Spinoza's *Ethics* as compared to his strictly mathematical method in the rest of his book. An interesting instance may be found as one compares Rambam's *Moreh*, III, 51 with the note at the end of chapter 54.⁵⁴ As against the emphasis on the intellectual love of God in the former, the last part of the classic work stresses the knowledge of God through the contemplation and imitation of His ethical qualities.

This is how the text reads in Friedlander's accurate translation:⁵⁵

"We are thus told in this passage (Ex. XXXVIII) that the Divine acts which ought to be known, and ought to serve as a guide for our actions, are "hesed (loving-kindness)," "mishpat, (judgment)" and "tzedakah (righteousness)". The object of the passage is to declare that the perfection in which a man can truly glory is attained by him when he has acquired — as far as this is possible for man — the knowledge and love of God. Having acquired this knowledge, he will then be determined always to seek loving-kindness, judgment, and righteousness and thus imitate the ways of God."

In his "*Iggeret ha-Kodesh*,"⁵⁶ Rabbi Shneur Zalman of Liady states that *Tzedakah* in its other meaning: charity is the greatest of all the mitzvot and that⁵⁷ Israel will be redeemed only through (the practice or merit of) Tzedakah; that the love of God flows from the very depth of the heart and is superior to knowledge (of Him).

IX

Rambam's emphasis on the knowledge of God as the primary duty of the faithful⁵⁸ and Shneur Zalman's stressing of *Tzedakah*

as the noblest *mitzvah*, (commandment, good deed), represent two apparently, though not necessarily, contradictory views.⁵⁹

The prophet, as God's spokesman, makes timeless pronouncements. The faith in, as the mystery of, their origin will remain an ever-dynamic source of metaphysical discussion. But their message has been found applicable in all lands, with all configurations, social, religious, local or universal.⁶⁰

The philosopher — for enlightenment or criticism — sums up the meaning of events or systems of thought and endeavors to include all nuances and facets for a complete statement.

The pietist probes to the very depth of human potentiality. He is profoundly aware and humbly conscious of Divine power, and of the benign wisdom and abiding unity in the changeless source behind the various aspects of the universe. The philosopher's definitions as well as the pietist's intuitive reactions to the validity of these definitions have often been foreshadowed by the prophetic message.

What the philosopher achieves as the fruit of prolonged meditation or fast bold abstraction, what the pietist finds in his self-abandonment to the One, the Eternal, the source at once of meaning, hope and challenge, the prophet, in cases without number, has long ago summed up in his "*Thus said the Lord*" revelations.

Maimonides, in the first and second chapter of *Hilkhot Yessode ha-Torah* (The laws concerning the basic Principles of the Torah) makes the following statement:

"The fundamental of all the basic principles, the pillar of all sciences, is to know that there is a First Being who brought all existing things — celestial, terrestrial and intermediate — into being, and that all of which exist only because of His own real existence. One will be led to love and reverence of Him through the contemplation of His

great and wondrous works and creatures, which affords one a glimpse of His incomparable, limitless wisdom. The Torah expresses this thought in its text: "*There is none besides Him,*⁶¹ i. e. no being truly like Him. Did not David say: "*When I behold thy heavens, the work of thy fingers — what is man that thou art mindful of him and the son of man that thou thinkest of him?*" In accord with these words, I shall explain the works of the Sovereign of the Universe that they may serve the man of discernment as a door to the love of God. For, this God, honored and awesome, it is our duty to love and revere."

To seek to know God, in the view of Maimonides, is the supreme, the first and foremost mitzvah (command or good deed). There are two ways for fulfilling it. One is the study of nature. The Talmud⁶² puts it thus: "One who knows the science of cycles and planets (astronomy) and does not follow it, concerning him Scripture says: '*But they regard not the work of the Lord, neither have they considered the operation of His hands.*'"⁶³ The other pathway is the study of His revelation, the Torah (or guidance) to goodness, worthwhileness, happiness and peace. In particular is it the process of the study of *Taame ha-Mitzvot* (the possible motivation of His commandments) that may grant one a glimpse of the divine mind. Hence Rambam's pre-occupation, especially in the third book of his *Moreh Nebukhim* (Guide of the Perplexed), with the search for the motivation of every Mitzvah, in which a human being may seem to catch a reflection of His set of values and ideas. Such discovered "cause" however, no matter how fascinating to the particular searcher, is but the fruit of his individual investigation and must not be assumed to be the ultimate or full divine motive. Nor may conformity to His mitzvot ever be made dependent on the discovery of some personally satisfactory reason. Therefore the search for an ever fuller, deeper apprehension of His unfathomable mind remains the supreme Mitzvah and the

resulting *Shilton ha-Sekbel* (no matter how far from the ultimate goal) one of the greatest consummations achievable by His loyal ambassador to the rest of mankind: the studious, steadfast students of the Torah among all the children of Israel. The accent throughout is on intellectual endeavor, although its rigid insistence is relaxed in the last chapter of the Moreh.⁶⁴

"The prophet does not content himself with explaining that the knowledge of God is the highest kind of perfection; for if this only had been his intention, he would have said, *"But in this let him who glorifieth himself, find glory, that he understandeth and knoweth Me,"* and would have stopped there, or he would have said, *"that he understandeth and knoweth Me and knoweth Me that I am One,"* or, *"that I have not any likeness,"* or, *"that there is none like Me,"* or a similar phrase. He says, however, that man can only glory in the knowledge of God and in the knowledge of His ways and attributes, which are His actions, as we have shown (Part I. liv.) in expounding the passage, *"Show me Thy ways"* (Exod. XXXVIII. 13). We are thus told in this passage that the Divine acts which ought to be known, and ought to serve as a guide for our actions, are, *"hesed, (loving-kindness)," "mishpat, (judgment),"* and *"tzedakah, (righteousness)." Another very important lesson is taught by the additional phrase, "in the earth."* It implies a fundamental principle of the Law; it rejects the theory of those who boldly assert that God's providence does not extend below the sphere of the moon, and that the earth with its contents is abandoned, that *"the Lord hath forsaken the earth"* (Exod. VIII.12). It teaches, as has been taught by the greatest of all wise men in the words, *"The earth is the Lord's"* (Exod. IX. 29), that His providence extends to the earth in accordance with its nature, in the same manner as it controls the heavens in accordance with their nature. This is expressed

in the words, "*That I am the Lord which exercise loving-kindness, judgment and righteousness in the earth.*" In a similar manner we have shown (Part I. liv.) that the object of the enumeration of God's thirteen attributes is the lesson that we should acquire similar attributes and act accordingly. The object of the above passage is therefore to declare, that the perfection, in which man can truly glory, is attained by him when he has acquired — as far as this is possible for man — the knowledge of God, the knowledge of His creatures in their production and continued existence. Having acquired this knowledge he will then be determined always to seek loving-kindness, judgment, and righteousness, and thus to imitate the ways of God."

X

An apparently contradictory emphasis is found in the writing of Lubavitch, Rabbi Shneur Zalman of Liady. He does stress the love of God as a primary commandment, and following earlier thinkers, bases it on a sense of gratitude for His endless bounty, but his major praise is unconnected with the processes of an inquiring mind or the results of such uninterrupted quest. He quotes the sages of the Talmud⁶⁵ who insisted: We must be more careful about the mitzvah of Tzedakah (charity) than about any other positive commandment, for it is of importance equal to all the Mitzvot of the Torah,⁶⁶ and brings redemption nearer.⁶⁷ Not a cloistered hermit, but a dynamic shepherd of his people, Rabbi Shneur Zalman had learned about the pangs of poverty so that the potent expression in the Talmud about the merit of relieving it had his comprehensive understanding. He found fault with earlier and contemporary teachers whose praise of the silent, solitary life, dedicated to worship of God, to the contemplation in utter loneliness of His greatness and mystery, had dimmed their sense of the glory of Tzedakah, quick, delicate, warm aid

to the suffering. They knew too little about the misery of the masses who lived shut out from comfort, and unable to supply their primitive needs. More than once did Shneur Zalman forsake his court for lengthy visits to the drab, bitter houses of the unemployed, to "God's quartette": the widow, the orphan, the sick, the stranger at the gate.⁶⁸ To him, the life of lonely prayers and frugal study in the woods, stayed bereft of a God-given opportunity for blissfulness: Tzedakah. A tzaddik, he felt, is not merely a righteous man. To deserve that appellation one must give Tzedakah, charity, of what one has, of what one knows, of what one is.

In his "Iggeret ha-Kodesh"⁶⁹ (Letter of Holiness) he expands his teaching: "Tzedakah is the greatest of all Mitzvot. Israel will be redeemed only through the practice of Tzedakah."⁷⁰ Did not Rabbi Shimeon proclaim that he who gives Tzedakah to the poor sanctifies God's name every day? The reward for sowing Tzedakah is the quality of truth. Remember: "*The work of Tzedakah shall be peace and the effect of Tzedakah quiet and confidence forever!*"⁷¹

When Isaiah described how "*He (the Lord) put Tzedakah as a coat of mail and as a helmet of salvation upon His head,*"⁷² our Sages of blessed memory commented: Just as in a coat of mail, every small scale joins with the others to form one piece of armor, so does every perutah (penny) spent on charity combine with the rest to form a large sum.⁷³ Whilst the bases of the Jewish life are HaBaD (Hakhmah, Binah, Deah — wisdom, understanding, knowledge), there is no mitzvah more noble than Tzedakah: "Tzedakah fashions a garment of glory for the soul, emanating from the light of God and embracing all the worlds. A tzaddik first gives the coin to the poor and only then offers his prayer. "*Only through the act of charity do I see Thy face,*"⁷⁴ for the grace of God looms over those who revere Him from everlasting to everlasting." "*Let Tzedakah well up as a mighty stream,*"⁷⁵ for it

is the spark of divinity in his own soul, stemming from the sublime Wisdom of heaven."

XI

It was the passionate servant of God, the ruthless denouncer of evil, the loving Jeremiah, who, thousands of years earlier, had offered the endorsement of both Maimonides and the Rav of Liady in a synthesis of *da'at* and *ahavah*, priceless in its simplicity:⁷⁸

Did not thy father eat and drink, and do justice and righteousness?

Then it was well with him.

He judged the cause of the poor and needy;

Then it was well.

Is not this to know Me? saith the Lord."

N O T E S

1. Paragr. 5.
2. Beresh. XVIII:28.
3. Shem. XXI:23.
4. J. H. Hertz, Pentateuch, p. 405.
5. Kuzari, I:4.
6. "Or Adonai."
7. Midrash Mishle *ad locum*.
8. See David Kaufmann, "Attributenlehre," IV:4c, VII:3.
9. Ber. 57b.
10. Deb. VI:5.
11. *Ibid.*, IV:39.
12. A. Jellinek, "Thos. Aquinas."
13. "Symposium" 201.
14. Shulh. Arukh, Eben ha-Ezer, XXV and also Seneca, Epistles IX:6 — for a polar attitude.
15. Ps. VIII:5.
16. "Ahabat Hessed," introduction.
17. Iliad XVIII:25.
18. Babli San. 7a, Yer. San. IV:13.
19. Baba M. 32b.
20. Ps. CXLV:9, Jonah IV:11.
21. See Da'at Eloh. in Otzar Yissrael and the corresp. article in Jewish Encyclopedia.
22. Vay. XIX:18 and 34.
23. Ber. IV:1.
24. Kidd. 48b, Baba B. 83b.
25. B. Baba 8b and comment. *a. l.*
26. Ps. CXXXIX:2 where "*re'd*" means "thought," also Targ. Onkel. on Bam. XVI:28.
27. "Emunot ve-Deot," Intro.
28. J. MacTaggart, "Plotinus" and Fritz Heineman, "Plotinus" *passim*.
29. "Symposium," *l. c.*

30. Aristotle, *Physics*, III:4.
31. Maximus of Tyre, *Dissert.* XV.
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42. "Modern Man in Search of a Soul," also "The Integration of Personality."
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44. Ber. Ra. XII:14.
45. Throughout the Tanakh.
46. Baba M. 16b.
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49. Prov. X:25.
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- 50a. Isaiah V:16.
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54. IX:6.
55. XII:7.
56. 3, 4, 6, 12.
57. Yer. Peah, I:1.
58. Yessode ha-Torah, I:1.
59. M. Teitelbaum, "ha-Rav mi-Liady" I.
60. Rambam on Prophecy, Kobetz, II.
61. The Alenu Prayer.
62. Shabbat 75a.
63. Isaiah V:12.
64. III:54.
65. Baba B. 10a.
66. *Ibid.*, 9a.

67. *Ibid.*
68. Deb. XV and XVI.
69. See note 56.
70. Baba B. 9-10a.
71. Isaiah XXXII:17.
72. *Ibid.*, LIX:17.
73. Baba B. I:c.
74. Ps. XVII:15.
75. Amos V:24.
76. Jer. XXII:15, 16.

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THE CHURCH AND FREE ENTERPRISE

"For freedom Christ has set us free; stand fast therefore, and do not submit again to a yoke of slavery."

—GALATIANS 5:1

The ninth chapter of Judges relates a story told by Jotham, the son of Gideon, as part of his protest against the aggression of Abimelech, his brother. As a vivid fable dealing with the political carelessness and apathy of good citizens, it is amazingly contemporary in its applications. The trees decided they would elect a king to provide governance in their affairs. They offered the honor to the olive, fig tree, and the vine but met refusal each time on the ground that the sacrifice involved was too great. Their private interests interfered with their acceptance of public responsibility. Chagrined by the default of such distinguished citizens of the tree kingdom they then offered the place to the bramble. The proffer met with instant acceptance. Note, too, that the predatory bramble became king of the trees at the behest of the trees themselves. From then on the bramble took over. For thus it is: when men for economic gain and security surrender their political responsibilities and personal integrity, they end as spiritual slaves amid the piercing and painful brambles of their own neglect.

Today thoughtful men are everywhere proclaiming with a new urgency the present perils to our political and economic freedom. There is need to observe in the contemporary setting the way in which brambles rise to entangling power, and strangling control. It was not the last time in human history that public office and the basic freedoms have gone by default to the unworthy and self-seeking simply because the more capable citizens were too engrossed in their own pursuits to give time and thought to public concerns. The real reason why the trees spurned the kingship was due to the low regard with which they viewed the regulatory functions of government. Lack of appreciation of economic and political liberty protected by good government on one side, plus an oversight of the predatory nature of brambles on the other led finally to their entanglement. The privileges we neglect fall to those whom we scorn. From trees to brambles, that is the order.

The Apostle Paul had with brilliant mind penetrated this inner spiritual issue in all freedoms. To keep his converts from yielding again to the constricting observances of Mosaic regulations, he admonished them to consider the real nature of their freedom that they might obtain a new appreciation of it. The astute Apostle knew that once they comprehended the Christian principle of the sacredness of human personality under the control of the

love of Christ they would never again submit to the yoke of any slavery. So, too, with us in these perilous times when men are surrendering one basic freedom after another in exchange for torturous brambles of enslavement. If we but understood the glorious nature of the freedoms, political and economic, that we possess we should appreciate them enough to assume the responsibilities and make the decisions by which alone they may be maintained.

Today, political insecurity and world revolution center primarily about the world's cry for bread. Two great contending theories of government and economics are arrayed against each other on a world scale. Moreover, criticisms of existing orders of government and economics find sharp cleavages among our own citizenry. Nor has the church itself escaped such divergent points of view. It now confronts the necessity of clarifying its own relation to the economic order just as recently it has clarified its relation to political structures. How shall it approach its task? Certainly not by surrendering its role as interpreter to the brambles of neglect because of preoccupation with lesser issues, or its reluctance to be drawn into a fight between capitalism and communism, or some variety of socialism.

The first need of us all in times like these when we seek to re-examine the bases of our beliefs is for a proper perspective. Economic orders and political structures are always in the process of flux and change. Capitalism is an accretion, the result of long centuries of change and development. It has been one thing in one period, another thing in another period. So it has been with communism, so it is with co-operatives, so it will be with any form of socialism. So it will be with any ideology, system, or order. We need, therefore, most desperately to achieve the calmness of historical perspective in order to escape the panics and confusions of the hour which befog the discussion of controversial subjects. Until we can do this we cannot properly evaluate any order.

As the church comes to deal with the problem of the economic order it must always be concerned more with principles by which the orders are evaluated than with the orders themselves. Bishop Gerald Kennedy gets rapidly and nicely to the very heart of how our personal interests always have a way of influencing our outlook upon any problem we are considering and how, therefore, we need to guard against the bias which springs from our own selfishness. He states, "We are called upon to build the kind of society that recognizes each individual man's worth. We are not to be mere defenders of the way things are. The fearful respect which so many Christians have for the ethics of the established order is a scandal. Christians were never supposed to assume that public opinion is the court of last appeal.

We are supposed to be in the vanguard of those who have caught a vision of a better society, a society that has established justice as its ruling passion." When this becomes the spirit of the church seeking to evaluate existing economic orders, it will doubtless lead to the view that neither capitalism nor communism can be considered as satisfying the ethical requirements of Christianity. The church must give such an interpretation of the Gospel of Christ that it will stand the test of time and of a later historical perspective.

The nature of true freedom is its ability to make individual personality and the welfare of people one by one the measure of all values and the test of every social institution. The greatest possible peril to such freedom is anything which makes the welfare of persons subservient to the welfare of institutions, whether economic, governmental, or ecclesiastical. Because of the God-given autonomy of every soul, conscience is free to regulate its own life. Institutions, including government and economic orders, exist for man, not man for them. Their worth is to be judged by what they do to or for men one by one. Once to appreciate this true nature of freedom is to refuse to submit again to any yoke of slavery.

The role of the church in a free society at this point becomes clear. The church is to be Christ's yard-stick for measuring the ministry of governments and economic orders to human need. It must, therefore, be critical of any social order or economy but become identified with none. It must be in the world but not of it. Structure changes, functioning grows faulty, and sin and greed enter any human system. The greater the entanglement of the church with the existing order it seeks to evaluate by Christ's measure of freedom, the less objective and accurate will be its findings. For example, a church identified with the state provides very little protection for the free conscience seeking to escape from control by the state. For this reason we simply must maintain separation of church and state, even though we must renounce all tax-exemption and similar benefits to do so. Something analogous to this is also true of the Church's relation to the economic order. If ability to meet human need is Christ's test of social institutions, it must be the church's test of social institutions. And the church must remain free to *apply* that test to governments and economic orders.

It is just at this point that so many business men become confused in their thinking and divided in their allegiance. They feel that a church that benefits from the products of an order ought not to criticize the order that makes such benefits possible. The position is emotionalized by such phrases as "biting the hand that feeds you." Meanwhile the great truth of the church's service is overlooked. Objectors to the church's criticism of the

existing order fail to appreciate the church's contribution to that order by helping it to correct those abuses within it which uncorrected would lead to its own destruction. For what fails to meet human need cannot stand. The role of the church in the recovery of the world is not only to give a revelation of what by Christ we are freed from in our own personal rights of man, but also to give a demonstration of what we are freed for by way of ministering to human need. In proportion as that ministry is persuasively and attractively presented we have the only antidote to that totalitarianism which is a reaction from the confusions and failures of democracy.

The church must in essence confront our contemporary economy with this penetrating question: Can it be that the current alternatives to democracy and free enterprise are attractive to so many minds because the people of the world are in a mood to shop about, that they want and are demanding something more than democracy and free enterprise, as they now know it, has offered them? That question will not down too easily by any rhetorical defense of the status quo. Moreover, America's outstanding business leaders themselves are raising that question. Mr. Charles E. Wilson has said, "It is the duty of the American Free Enterprise System to recognize the advent of a new, dangerous era. Our people demand economic freedom and security. If we don't give them their birthright, some other system will attempt the job." No one outside a mental institution can take issue with that. The inability of other systems to deliver on the basis of their extravagant promises is irrelevant to the necessity of free enterprise meeting human needs if it is to endure. If the price of the church's helping it to do so is to criticize some of its present failures, it is not too great a price to pay. It goes without saying that the church should also commend successes as well as point out failures!

It is the business of the church to focus the spotlight of truth upon all systems and upon all orders. It must identify itself only with the truth, with justice, and with freedom for all men, one by one. Its basic task is to be an authority in those spiritual principles and those standards of human freedom and welfare which are to be the goals of our striving. The New Testament provides the church not with a correct economic pattern, but with a true spiritual path or set of principles by which patterns and orders may be constructed to meet the needs of any given time. In its national councils and world deliberations the church is seeking to formulate and enunciate such a set of principles to guide us in our striving.

Free enterprise can never rest on sure foundations until its disadvantages as well as its advantages have alike been examined by all, and a conclusion reached by the majority that its advantages outweigh its disadvantages.

There can be no real faith in any economic order until it has been so carefully examined that its disadvantages are knowingly accepted as a discipline which makes possible its continued benefits. That is, unless one believes in Utopia. Let us assume that few are so naive. Let it be added that the evaluation should be made on the basis of what a system does and not upon what a system promises some time in the future to do for a human society.

The position that the church must not identify itself with any economic system and therefore be free to criticize all economic orders will be unpopular with the conservative who will denounce the church for its failure to defend the status quo. It will be equally unpopular with the liberal who is likely to charge the church with blocking progress as a perfectionist-criticism of a proposed new order. But unless the church retains its liberty to criticize any existing economy, it will not then be able through its criticisms to contribute to the welfare or preservation of that order by helping it to correct its own abuses which uncorrected will lead to its destruction. No economic system which fails to meet basic human needs can endure. Nor does it deserve to! All systems are under the judgments of God. The evils of a perverted collectivism are hardly to be preferred to the evils of unrestricted individualism. But the church need not and must not put its stamp of approval on either. Greed and selfishness are not lovely no matter where they exist.

But in all fairness, let the church verbalize this lesson from our times. Political freedom of a kind that safeguards our spiritual liberties cannot be maintained apart from economic freedom. Democracy is impossible apart from a worthy free enterprise, because coercion, which means slavery, is necessary in a planned economy. A planned economy involves a peril to freedom at the point where coercion must enter to make the plan effective. The "mixed" economy doesn't stay mixed. Planning cannot tolerate an economic freedom inside a planned economy for that invalidates the plan. A plan is no good unless it is followed. To see that it is followed, enforcement is required. With enforcement the Gestapo enters and the freedoms depart.

This brings us to the heart of the matter. If business wishes to recover the integrity of free enterprise, it must not only insist that government put its house in order, but it must also keep its own house clean. One wonders what would happen to modern advertising were it to limit itself to the truth! One wonders what would happen to the lushly financed lobbies maintained by special business interests seeking exemptions from the free competition they verbally champion. One recalls that bribes accepted by a Five Per Center had to be offered by someone! Is he who bribes less guilty

than he who accepts it? And what of exorbitant cost-plus contracts in the time of national peril paid for by taxes levied on one's fellow-citizens? Can business maintain her integrity by sowing seeds of scarcity in soils of human need, dumping out food in the face of the hunger of the world in order to maintain a market? The youth of today can bring a new integrity to the business of tomorrow by a more sincere approach to the motto of "service above self" than is currently exhibited in the streams of commerce. Before all this shall the church remain silent?

The divine changing of human hearts more than the human changing of economic systems is our best hope of deliverance from human selfishness and human greed. A bad order with a good heart is better than a "good" order with a bad heart. The church must strive to promote goodness both in the orders and in the hearts of men. The improvement of any economic order must begin with and issue from the hearts of men. Selfishness and greed with their demands for special privileges are common to all economic systems and the cause of their basic evils. Socialism has not yet confronted society with a demonstration of an order freed from the blights of greed and special privilege. The very desire for the redistribution of wealth may be nothing more than covetousness and economic ignorance. The task of the church is to proclaim alike the punishments and rewards of the judgment of God in a morally reliable universe.

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